

immediately after, that it was an attempt of the same kind as that of demolishing a tower by assaulting it with pebbles. Nor do I need to observe how generally, if a momentary impression be made, it is forgotten the following hour.

A man convinced of the truth and excellence of Christianity, yet entertaining a more flattering notion of the reason and moral dispositions of man than any doctrine of that religion agrees to, maybe very reluctant to admit that there is such a fatal disproportion between the apparatus, if I may call it so, of the Christian means as left to be actuated by mere human energy, and the object which is to be attempted. But how is he to help himself? Will he reject the method of conclusion from facts, in an affair where they so peculiarly constitute the evidence? He cannot look at the world of facts and contradict the representation in the preceding paragraph, unless his imagination is so illusive as to interpose an absolute phantasm between his eyes and the obvious reality. He cannot affirm that there is *not* an immense number of persons, even educated persons, receiving the Christian declarations with indifference, or rejecting them with a carelessness partaking of contempt. The right means are applied, and with all the force that human effort can give them, but with a suspension, in these instances, of the divine agency,—and *this* is the effect! While the fact stands out so palpably to view, I listen with something of wonder, and something of curiosity, when some professed believers and advocates of the gospel are avowing high anticipations of its progressive efficacy, chiefly or solely by means of the intrinsic force which it carries as a rational address to rational creatures. I cannot help inquiring what length of time is to be allowed for the experiment, which is to prove the adequacy of the means independently of special divine intervention. Nor can it be impertinent to ask what is, thus far, the state of the experiment and the success, among those who scout the idea of such a divine agency, as a dream of fanaticism. Might it not be prudent, to moderate the expressions of contempt for the persuasion which excites an importunity for extraordinary influence from the Almighty, till the success without it shall be greater? The utmost arrogance of this contempt will venture no comparison between the respective success, in the conversion of vain and wicked